



April 20, 2005

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the foodservice distribution industry, I urge your support for the Dominican Republic-Central America FTA (DR-CAFTA) to ensure free and fair trade for U.S. businesses throughout this critical region.

IFDA is a trade organization representing foodservice distributors throughout the U.S., Canada, and internationally. IFDA's 130+ members include broadline, systems, and specialty foodservice distributors that supply food and related products to restaurants, institutions, and other food away from home foodservice operations. IFDA members operate more than 550 facilities, and sell more than \$75 billion in food and related products to the fastest growing sector in the food industry.

IFDA and its members are committed to free international trade. The DR-CAFTA is an historic and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement that will strip away barriers to trade, eliminate tariffs, open markets, and promote investment. By promoting economic growth in the Central American countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, as well as in the Dominican Republic, this cutting edge pact will expand U.S. opportunities in important regional markets. It is also worth noting that implementation of the accord will accomplish an important goal on the way toward a comprehensive Free Trade Area of the Americas.

The US wholesale distribution sector should see specific benefits from the removal of barriers that inhibit the movement of consumer goods and agriculture products between manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, and consumers. Stronger intellectual property rights provisions will protect brand names for franchised companies, and the accord should help streamline the supply chain to better serve consumers in the United States and throughout the hemisphere.

IFDA will include this vote in our congressional vote ratings. These vote ratings are the basis for the food distribution industry's Thomas Jefferson Award, which is given to those Members of Congress whose voting records demonstrate consistent support for our legislative agenda.

I urge you to support the DR-CAFTA. Reducing tariffs and increasing exports will help make our economy stronger and create more jobs for Americans.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David A. Pol".

Senior Vice President, Government Relations